

Earthrise – A poem by Amanda Gorman

This poem by Inaugural Youth Poet Laureate of the United States Amanda Gorman was read from stage at the Los Angeles Climate Reality Leadership Corps Training on Tuesday, August 28, 2018.

She dedicated it to Al Gore and The Climate Reality Project.

On Christmas Eve, 1968, astronaut Bill Anders (Stanza 1)

Snapped a photo of the earth

As Apollo 8 orbited the moon.

Those three guys

Were surprised

To see from their eyes

Our planet looked like an earthrise

A blue orb hovering over the moon's gray horizon,
with deep oceans and silver skies.

It was our world's first glance at itself (Stanza 2)

Our first chance to see a shared reality,

A declared stance and a commonality;

A glimpse into our planet's mirror, (Stanza 3)

And as threats drew nearer,

Our own urgency became clearer,

As we realize that we hold nothing dearer
than this floating body we all call home.

We've known (Stanza 4)

That we're caught in the throes

Of climactic changes some say

Will just go away,

While some simply pray

To survive another day;

For it is the obscure, the oppressed, the poor,

Who when the disaster

Is declared done,

Still suffer more than anyone.

Climate change is the single greatest challenge of our time, (Stanza 5)

Of this, you're certainly aware.

It's saddening, but I cannot spare you

From knowing an inconvenient fact, because

It's getting the facts straight that gets us to act and not to wait.

So I tell you this not to scare you,
But to prepare you, to dare you
To dream a different reality,

(Stanza 7)

Where despite disparities
We all care to protect this world,
This riddled blue marble, this little true marvel
To muster the verve and the nerve
To see how we can serve
Our planet. You don't need to be a politician
To make it your mission to conserve, to protect,
To preserve that one and only home
That is ours,
To use your unique power
To give next generations the planet they deserve.

(Stanza 8)

We are demonstrating, creating, advocating
We heed this inconvenient truth, because we need to be anything but lenient
With the future of our youth.

(Stanza 9)

And while this is a training,
in sustaining the future of our planet,
There is no rehearsal. The time is
Now
Now
Now,
Because the reversal of harm,
And protection of a future so universal
Should be anything but controversial.

(Stanza 10)

So, earth, pale blue dot
We will fail you not.

Just as we chose to go to the moon
We know it's never too soon
To choose hope.
We choose to do more than cope
With climate change
We choose to end it—
We refuse to lose.
Together we do this and more
Not because it's very easy or nice
But because it is necessary,
Because with every dawn we carry
the weight of the fate of this celestial body orbiting a star.
And as heavy as that weight sounded, it doesn't hold us down,
But it keeps us grounded, steady, ready,

(Stanza 11)

(Stanza 12)

Because an environmental movement of this size
Is simply another form of an earthrise.

To see it, close your eyes.
Visualize that all of us leaders in this room
and outside of these walls or in the halls, all
of us changemakers are in a spacecraft,
Floating like a silver raft
in space, and we see the face of our planet anew.
We relish the view;
We witness its round green and brilliant blue,
Which inspires us to ask deeply, wholly:
What can we do?
Open your eyes.
Know that the future of
this wise planet
Lies right in sight:
Right in all of us. Trust
this earth uprising.
All of us bring light to exciting solutions never tried before
For it is our hope that implores us, at our uncompromising core,
To keep rising up for an earth more than worth fighting for.

(Stanza 13)